



CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL



The next **Child Welfare Council Annual Report** covering the period **from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023**, will feature highlights on the work of the Council and its committees. Please use this template to write your committee report and submit it to Sarah.Saria@jud.ca.gov no later than **November 17, 2023**.

Readers may not be familiar with acronyms and abbreviations. Please fully write out acronyms and abbreviations the first time you use them and be consistent in using the same acronym or abbreviation throughout the rest of the report.

Readers may not be familiar with policies, organizations, or programs that are well known to your committee. Please consider including brief explanations so readers can better understand your report.

July 2022 through June 2023 Activities and Accomplishments: Please briefly list major activities and accomplishments for FY 2022-23.

Concerns or Challenges: Describe any issues that you feel need the Council's attention in order to maximize opportunities to address barriers to the work of the Council.

2023 – 2024 Goals & Objectives: Indicate your committee's goals and objectives for the coming year.

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| Committee/ Task Force Name | California Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (acronym CSEC) Action Team |
| Purpose | <p>The CSEC Action Team is a dynamic and responsive statewide workgroup that brings together key stakeholders—community based and grassroots organizations, public agencies, lived experience experts, service providers, parent partners, judges, lawyers, and interested community members to address the commercial sexual exploitation (acronym CSE) of children and youth.</p> <p>We meet on a quarterly basis to grow awareness about CSE, identify challenges facing California's young people impacted by CSE, share promising practices, and develop tools and resources. Our goal is to</p> |

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| | <p>encourage members across California to act to better serve youth and their families who have been impacted by exploitation.</p> |
| July 2022 through June 2023 Activities and Accomplishments | <p>The CSEC Action Team continues to meet on a quarterly basis. CSEC Action Team meeting participants include representatives from multidisciplinary agencies (e.g., child welfare, mental health, probation, etc.), community-based organizations, and lived experience experts. Each quarterly meeting provides information on a specific topic that has been highlighted as an area of interest by CSEC Action Team members. Alongside the specific meeting topic, each meeting goes over regularly scheduled agenda items such as: legislation updates, member report outs and opportunities, Advisory Board report outs on consultations and projects they completed during the prior quarter, and harm reduction quick tips.</p> <p>Please see below for further information about the quarterly meeting topics:</p> <p>QUARTERLY MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting Native Youth Impacted by Exploitation: A Call to Action for Advocates - September 2022 The September 7th CSEC Action Team meeting focused on highlighting the impact of CSE on Native communities and providing historical context and its connection to the modern-day exploitation of Native youth. During the meeting, presenters Jessica Valadez from the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL) and Raechel Ibarra from the Children's Law Center of California (acronym CLC) presented on the report "Supporting Native Youth Impacted by Exploitation: A Call to Action for Advocates," where they highlighted the need for culturally responsive care, identification, and service provision for Native youth. In addition to the presentation, meeting participants also discussed challenges around identification, service provision, and building relationships with Tribal partners in breakout sessions. The breakout sessions allowed for participants to collectively discuss strategies they have previously used to overcome these challenges. ● From the Frontlines: Direct Service Providers Discuss CSE in California - December 2022 |

The December 7th CSEC Action Team meeting elevated the perspectives of community-based organizations (acronym CBOs) from across the state. CBOs representing different disciplines and communities discussed emerging trends, challenges, and innovative practices they have used to address those challenges when working with youth impacted by and vulnerable to CSE. Some themes that providers highlighted were an increase in violence and substance use, the need for mental health services and substance abuse treatment, the need for application of harm reduction approaches, the use of successful prevention programs for youth vulnerable to exploitation, and much more. In addition to hearing from the CBOs, meeting participants took part in a breakout session to further discuss the challenges that were highlighted by CBOs and brainstorm solutions.

- **Santa Clara County Spotlight - March 2023**
The March 1st CSEC Action Team meeting was held in a hybrid format (meaning in-person and virtually). The meeting highlighted CBOs in Santa Clara County and the ways they have utilized harm reduction practices, a continuum of placement options, and wrap-around services to meet the needs of youth at risk of and confirmed to have experienced CSE. Present as panelists were representatives from Young Women's Freedom Center, Starlight Community Services, and Community Solutions. Some themes that the presenters uplifted were the desire to connect youth with support agencies that already exist within their communities, the need for trauma-informed and person-centered approaches, and the importance of wrap-around services.
- **Supporting Youth with Issues Related to Substance Use/Misuse and CSE - June 2023**

The June 14th CSEC Action Team meeting focused on the intersection of substance use and CSE. During the meeting, Leslie Heimov, the CSEC Action Team Co-Chair, and Maria Contreras, an Executive Committee member, presented data on the prevalence of substance use among youth and the vulnerabilities, stigmas and challenges youth face when dealing with substance use and CSE. The meeting also featured presentations from the Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) and Youth for Change, La Familia in Alameda County. Irene Lim from CHLA provided an overview of their prevention and treatment program, discussed how they have collaborated with systems while navigating confidentiality limitations, and how the use of harm reduction approaches has impacted the youth they work with. A youth leader also shared her experience as a CHLA program participant, and discussed how she has utilized her leadership role to connect with and provide education for other youth. Jesus Sanchez from La Familia also gave a program overview, discussed the importance of collaboration with community partners, and shared the positive effects that can arise when a youth feels like their needs have been centered as they seek resources and support. Lastly, Chelsey Holzser, a CSEC Action Team Advisory Board member, uplifted a resource for meeting participants—the Debt Bondage Repair Act.

In addition, the CSEC Action Team provided learning opportunities in between quarterly meetings to address the needs elevated during the quarterly meetings. For further information on the learning opportunities that were hosted, please see below:

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Bob's House of Hope: A Safehouse for Young Men - July 2022**
During this learning opportunity, the CSEC Action Team hosted a presentation on Bob's House of Hope, a program of Ranch Hands Rescue in Texas. Presenter Landon Dickenson provided participants with information about the program, which operates as a comprehensive residential program and safe house for up to 3 years for young adult male-identifying survivors of sex trafficking. Ranch Hands Rescue also prevents sex trafficking of males by providing trauma resolution to boys who have been sexually abused. The presenter also shared with participants the goal of the program: to provide a safe place to live for male survivors to rest, recover, and rebuild and to empower young men with the skills and trades they need to sustain themselves and reach independence after a lifetime of trauma.
- **Practical Strategies to Identify, Serve, and Engage Native Youth Impacted by CSE - November 2022**

During this learning opportunity, the CSEC Action Team along with the Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Project—administered by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California—hosted a panel discussion that provided meeting participants with practical tips to identify, serve, engage Native youth impacted by CSE, and build and maintain relationships with Tribal leaders and communities. The featured presenters were Bonnie Clairmont, from Tribal Law and Policy Institute, Angie Heredia from the Southern Indian Health Council, Inc., and Nanette Norton from Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services.

- **Where is Your Humanity: The Realities of the Commercial Sex Trade and Our Vision for the Future - January 2023**

During this learning opportunity and human trafficking awareness month (HTAM) special event, lived experience experts from the CSEC Action Team's Advisory Board held a candid discussion about the realities of exploitation on youth and young adults, the impact of decriminalizing the sex trade, and their hopes and visions for the future.

- **Live Art Gallery - January 2023**

During this HTAM special event—sponsored by the CSEC Action Team, PACT, and the California Department of Social Services' Child Trafficking Response Team—survivors of human trafficking participated in a live virtual art gallery that aimed to uplift their artistic works and creative expressions which included: art, spoken and written word, and multimedia pieces.

- **Compassion Fatigue Training - January 2023**

During this HTAM special event, the CSEC Action Team provided a restorative training aimed at recognizing providers for their commitment to the youth and families they serve. The training, which was facilitated by Françoise Mathieu, M., ED., RP., CCC from TEND Academy, provided participants with practical ways to identify and address vicarious/secondary trauma and trauma resulting from the impact of lived experience in the work.

- **Becoming Me: Curriculum Preview - June 2023**

During this learning opportunity the CSEC Action Team hosted a preview of the Becoming Me curriculum—a trauma-informed, gender-specific intervention curriculum for youth and young adults that have been impacted by CSE aimed at helping them on their journey towards healing and establishing identity. Meeting participants received an overview of the curriculum content, viewed video clips of videos included in the full training, and learned about the various ways in which the curriculum content can be facilitated.

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| Concerns or Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing participation from law enforcement partners continues to be a challenge. ● There continues to be high turnover of county CSEC specific service providers and other key stakeholders who attend the CSEC Action Team meetings. We are actively brainstorming ways to provide onboarding materials to new members of the action team so they can be active and engaged participants as we continue to move the work forward. ● We are continuing to brainstorm ways to engage and center the work of the action team on communities' needs. We want to ensure that community-based organizations and underrepresented communities are present so we can be more inclusive and more responsive to communities' needs. |
| 2023 - 2024 Goals/Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue uplifting, developing, and disseminating best practices to, identify and serve youth impacted by CSE, particularly the disproportionately impacted populations of youth, and prevent CSE. ● Elevate the importance of county and community-based organization partnerships and facilitate those partnerships whenever possible. ● Collaborate with counties and community-based organizations to encourage partnerships between the two entities to better serve youth and their families impacted by CSE. ● Center the voices and experiences of people with lived expertise to guide and inform the work of the CSEC Action Team. ● Continue to provide informative presentations, trainings and learning opportunities aimed at addressing expressed areas of interest by CSEC Action Team meeting participants. |